



UNITED STATES ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION AGENCY

REGION 10  
1200 Sixth Avenue  
Seattle, WA 98101

AUG 31 2000

Reply To  
Attn of: ECL-115

The Honorable Gary Locke  
Governor of the State of Washington  
P.O. Box 40002  
Olympia, Washington 98504-0002

Re: Support for Listing the Lower Duwamish Waterway on the  
Superfund National Priorities List

Dear Governor Locke:

The purpose of this letter is to request your assistance in abating a threat to public health and the environment. As you are aware, the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) Region 10 has determined that it is appropriate to continue the process of listing the Lower Duwamish Waterway site in Seattle, Washington, on the Superfund National Priorities List (NPL), and is making that recommendation to EPA Headquarters. Adding the site to the NPL will guarantee a comprehensive enforceable agreement with the responsible parties as well as provide for strict cleanup standards.

As part of the Superfund listing process, it is EPA's policy to request support from the Governor of the State in which the site is located. Therefore, we are asking for a letter from you that supports the designation of the Lower Duwamish Waterway to the NPL.

EPA conducted a site investigation of the Lower Duwamish Waterway (river kilometer 2.5 - 11.5) during the summer of 1998. The area of concern is highly industrialized and is utilized for heavy cargo shipping. Approximately 315 river sediment and pore water samples were collected. Results from the EPA site investigation indicated sediment contamination has occurred throughout the study area and that the site scores high enough to be placed on the NPL. Contaminants include polychlorinated biphenyls, polycyclic aromatic hydrocarbons, inorganic compounds, pesticides, organotins and dioxins/furans.

EPA is requesting that this site be cleaned up under Superfund authorities for several reasons. First, Tribal and federal trustees are very concerned about the impact the site may have on the fishery resources in the Lower Duwamish Waterway.

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Subsistence, recreational and commercial fishing occurs within the study area. The National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration is also concerned about protecting the Chinook salmon, which has been designated as a threatened species under the Endangered Species Act. In addition, the Coho salmon in the Lower Duwamish Waterway is being reviewed for potential federal listing under the Endangered Species Act.

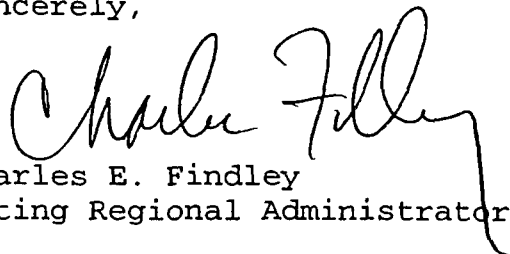
EPA has worked with the Washington State Department of Ecology (Ecology) to examine an alternative cleanup approach that would not have required a NPL listing for this site. However, it now appears unlikely that this approach will be successful. EPA has now reached the conclusion that this site should be proposed for inclusion on the NPL.

We do not expect NPL listing to slow down the investigation and cleanup process. It is EPA and Ecology's intention to utilize the work completed to date and move forward quickly to address the health and environmental risks at the site.

If you concur that the Lower Duwamish Waterway site should be proposed to the NPL, please forward a letter to Administrator Browner (with a copy to my office). To ensure that we could move forward expeditiously, we would appreciate your response by September 27, 2000.

EPA hopes to continue working closely with Ecology to ensure that our common goal of protecting public health and the environment is fully realized. Should you require additional information, please do not hesitate to contact me at (206)553-0454, or have your staff contact Loren McPhillips at (206) 553-4903. Thank you for your attention to this request.

Sincerely,



Charles E. Findley  
Acting Regional Administrator

cc: Tom Fitzsimmons, Ecology